

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 OMB-01 SIL-01 LAB-06 EB-11 RSR-01 /122 W

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R 231500 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1857

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 2883

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, NU

SUBJECT: WEEKLY POLITICAL SUMMARY JUNE 16-22, 1973

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

REF: MANAGUA 2799

1. CONSTRUCTION STRIKE CONTINUES: THE TENTATIVE AGREEMENT TO END THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS' STRIKE REACHED THE MORNING OF JUNE 21 (MANAGUA 2867), WAS REJECTED BY THE CONSTRUCTION CHAMBER WHICH REFUSED TO SIGN ANY DOCUMENT WHICH RECOGNIZED THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS UNION (SCAAS) WAGE DEMAND AS A BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS. THE CONSTRUCTION CHAMBER MADE A COUNTER OFFER ON WAGES WHICH WAS REJECTED BY THE SCAAS NEGOTIATORS IN A HEATED MEETING IN THE OFFICE OF ACTING LABOR MINISTER MUNIZ OTERO WHICH ENDED AT ABOUT 1:00 AM JUNE 22. NO FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN SCHEDULED OR TAKEN PLACE SINCE THAT TIME. DURING THIS MEETING MUNIZ REPORTEDLY WARNED BOTH PARTIES THAT IF THEY DID NOT REACH AGREEMENT SOON, THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE FORCED TO IMPOSE A WAGE SETTLEMENT UNDER ITS EMERGENCY POWERS (PRESUMABLY MARTIAL LAW),
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IN ORDER TO GET THE RECONSTRUCTION EFFORT UNDER WAY AGAIN.

2. THE CURRENT POSITIONS OF THE CONTENDING PARTIES ARE AS FOLLOWS:
THE CONSTRUCTION CHAMBER OFFERED WAGE INCREASES OF TWO CORDOBAS
TWENTY- FIVE CENTAVOS (TWELVE AND ONE HALD PERCENT RAISE) TO
HELPERS
WHO CURRENTLY RECEIVE TWO CORDOBAS (TWENTY- EIGHT US CENTS) AN
HOUR AND THREE CORDOBAS THIRTY CENTAVOS (TEN PERCENT RAISE) TO
CRAFTSMEN WHO CURRENTLY RECEIVE THREE CORDOBAS (FORTY- TWO US
CENTS) AN HOUR. SCAAS DEMANDS THREE CORDOBAS FIFTY CENTAVOS
(SEVENTY FIVE PERCENT RAISE) FOR HELPERS AND FIVE CORDOBAS (SIXTY
SEVEN PERCENT RAISE) FOR CRAFTSMEN. SCAAS JUSTIFIES THESE
DEMANDS BY POINTING OUT THAT THE LAST GENERAL INCREASE IN
CONSTRUCTION WAGES OCCURRED TEN YEARS AGO.

3. COMMENT: AFTER THE FAILURE OF THE JUNE 21 TENTATIVE AGREEMENT
BOTH SIDES HAVE HARDENED THEIR POSITION AND SEEM TO BE SETTLING
DOWN FOR A LONG BATTLE. MANY CONSTRUCTION WORKERS, AS IN THE
LAST STRIKE (MANAGUA A-24), HAVE ALREADY FOUND TEMPORARY JOBS
DOING SMALL SCALE REPAIR WORK AND CONSTRUCTION. THE CONSTRUCTION
CHAMBER SEEMS EQUALLY DETERMINED, WITH PRESIDENT ENRIQUE
PEREIRA PREDICTING AN EIGHT WEEK STRIKE IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS
WITH AN EMBASSY OFFICER. (PEREIRA IS NOTED FOR EXTREME POSITIONS
ON ALMOST ALL SUBJECTS). THE MAIN LOSER IN THE STRIKE IS THE
RECONSTRUCTION EFFORT ITSELF. THE NEXT INITIATIVE WILL PROBABLY COME
FROM THE GON. END COMMENT.

4. MORE ELECTIONS 1974: OTHER OPPOSITION ELEMENTS (AGUERO
CONSERVATIVES, PCN- A; SOCIAL CHRISTIANS, PSC, LIBERAL
INDEPENDENTS, PLI; SUPPORTERS OF RAMIRO SACASA; SUPPORTERS OF
PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO; SUPPORTERS OF NATIONAL UNIVERSITY RECTOR
TUNNERMAN, AND A HOST OF OTHER MINOR GROUPINGS INCLUDING
NICARAGUA' S
TWO COMMUNIST PARTIES, PSN AND PCN- O), CONTINUE THEIR TALKS, WHICH
INCLUDE CONSIDERABLE NUMBERS OF PREVIOUSLY POLITICALLY INACTIVE
BUSINESSMEN. THE OTHER OPPOSITION REPORTEDLY HAS REACHED A
TENTATIVE DECISION NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 1974 ELECTORAL PROCESS
BUT RATHER TO CONCENTRATE ON OTHER FORMS OF OPPOSITION ACTION.

5. THE ONE EXCEPTION TO THIS UNITED FRONT MAY BE THE PSC. A FORMAL
DECISION HAS YET TO BE MADE, BUT IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS WITH
EMBASSY OFFICERS SOME OLDER PSC LEADERS HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY
FEEL IDEOLOGICALLY COMPELLED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS
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AS LONG AS ANY CONSTITUTIONAL METHOD OF OPPOSITION IS LEFT OPEN TO
THEM. CHAMORRO' S LA PRENSA HAS INDIRECTLY ATTACKED THE
PSC' S DECISION EVEN BEFORE IT IS FORMALLY MADE BY QUOTING A
LIBERAL DEPUTY TO THE EFFECT THAT THE NEW CONSTITUTION WILL MAKE IT
EASIER FOR THIRD PARTIES TO GAIN LEGAL RECOGNITION AND PARTICIPATE

IN THE 1974 ELECTIONS. LA PRENSA ASKS THE RHETORICAL QUESTION WHY? AND SUPPLIES THE ANSWER THAT THIRD PARTY PARTICIPATION IN 1974 WILL HELP SOMOZA MAINTAIN NICARAGUA' S DEMOCRATIC FACADE ABROAD.

6. COMMENT: WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE PSC, THE OTHER OPPOSITION SEEMS CLOSER TO AN AD HOC COALITION THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE THE EARTHQUAKE. PEDRO JOAQUIN CHAMORRO AND RAMIRO SACASA ARE REPORTEDLY THE PRINCIPAL LEADERS OF THIS EMERGING GROUPING. A DEFINITIVE STRATEGY HAS YET TO AGREEED ON BUT THERE IS MUCH TALK OF A DECLARATION OF NO CONFIDENCE IN THE SOMOZA GOVERNMENT TO BE SIGNED BY MANY INDEPENDENT FIGURES IN NICARAGUA AS A STARTING POINT OF A NEW MORE UNITED OPPOSITION MOVEMENT. END COMMENT.

7. SOMOZA RETURNS, SON MAY GO TO SANDHURST: ON JUNE 11 GENERAL SOMOZA RETURNED FROM HIS UNITED STATES TRIP TO ATTEND THZ HARVARD GRADUATION OF HIS ELDEST SON AND HEIR APPARENT, ANASTASIO SOMOZA PORTOCARRERO (TACHITO III). SOMOZA OWNED NOVEDADES BROKE THE NEWS THAT YOUNG SOMOZA WILL CONTINUE HIS EDUCATION AT THE BRITISH MILITARY ACADEMY, SANDHURST. EMBASSY SOURCES INDICATE TACHITO III WILL SPEND ABOUT SIX MONTHS AT SANDHURST IN A SPECIAL COURSE AT THE INVITATION OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. SOMOZA PORTOCARRERO' S SUMMER VACATION WILL BE HIGHLIGHTED BY FIVE WEEKS PARATROOP TRAINING AT FORT BENNING, GEORGIA. THE GENERAL' S SECOND SON, JULIO, WILL ENTER WEST POINT IN THE FALL. COMMENT: THE SOMOZA SONS ARE CLEARLY FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THEIR ILLUSTRIOUS FATHER AND GRANDFATHER. TACHITO III, IN PARTICULAR, SEEMS TO BE TRAINING FOR THE MILITARY- ECONOMIC- POLITICAL ROLE CURRENTLY OCCUPIED BY HIS FATHER, DESPITE THE YOUNG MAN' S OCCASIONAL PROTESTS TO THE PRESS THAT IT ISN' T SO. END COMMENT .
SHELTON

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